

EXHIBIT A

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENT SUMMARIES

March 16, 2015

Spring Mill State Park Inn

Mark Crane, Lawrence County, Bedford

Crane said he would like to see the establishment of a primitive weapons season with using traditional muzzle loaders. "No in-lines, no scopes, no plastic stocks, just a traditional old-fashioned muzzle loader."

Darrell Lee, Warrick County

Lee indicated he is a member of the Erie Canal Beagle Club ("Club"), and said the Club would like to see rabbit season revert back to ending the season on January 31. Lee observed that in southern Indiana by the end of January and February the does are paired up and during February they are carrying young. For that reason, according to Lee, the club's members do not take rabbits after January 31st. Lee said the proposed rule amendment at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d) does not make any sense adding, "I never killed a deer over a hundred yards. I don't need a rifle. Would I use one if I could? I don't know...Why can't the DNR leave certain things alone? It seems like it's just getting more and more, bag limits keep going up and up...It's not stopping. Now the rifles...Now the rabbit season is changing...Let's stop. We never think about what we are hunting. You know, it's really frustrating, real, real frustrating. There's no common sense...that I can see on some of these decisions."

Harold Jourdan, Warrick County

Jourdan, a Trustee of the Erie Canal Beagle Club, said "You are basically killing off the breeding stock. If the idea is to conserve the rabbit population, which there is less every year, they're defeating the purpose because you're knocking off that breeding stock". He noted that weather conditions cannot be controlled, but the seasons can be controlled. Jourdan commented that quail are obsolete. "There is no recourse except to replenish the birds. You've got habitat in certain places, but there are no birds in there to reproduce."

Dale Sides, Jefferson County

Sides, who is with the Indiana Catfish Conservation Association, stated the Association supports the proposed restrictions on the commercial fishing on the Wabash River. Sides stated that he is opposed to the center-fire rifle rule amendment.

Bret Raines, Lawrence County

Questioned the proposal regarding closing the season of ruffed grouse. He said the habitat for grouse has been removed. He said Michigan builds habitat by conservation and timbering, and asked whether Indiana could also promote the restoration of habitat. Raines said grouse hunting is a dying sport. He suggested the DNR concentrate on wildlife management, not on the taking of that wildlife.

James Walton, Mitchell

Walton stated that he saw his last grouse about three years ago. Walton said he timbers his property and there is a lot of cover on his property. "So, I don't know what happened to [the grouse]." Walton said his residence is adjacent to a parcel of woods. "I don't really like the idea of sitting in my house and somebody shooting through it...I don't want any getting hurt."

Barry Hattabaugh, Washington County

Hattabaugh said that there has been a lot of timbering on public grounds in Washington County this year and last year, which should help the grouse population. He noted that closure of the grouse season for two or three years is not a "big deal" but stated his preference in seeing some reintroduction efforts during that time. We should have some habitat in the next four or five years if they do something about it." He said habitat is a big issue. Hattabaugh observed with respect to the proposed amendment to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d) that there is a "fear fact involved especially people who don't know," and noted that he supported the rule proposal.

Willie Sprinkle, Paoli

Sprinkle said, "To be blunt, it would be stupid to limit pan fish to 25 bluegill, or what have you." He noted that pan fish reproduce "so often and so much that...[the limit] will stunt their growth." Sprinkle said he can catch the proposed bag limit in 30 minutes. Sprinkle offered support for the center-fire rifle rule proposal, but agreed that a cap should be added. He said a "slug is more dangerous than a .243."

Merle Crane, Bedford

Crane noted that the proposed bag limit on Blue Gill will cause the Blue Gill to overrun the ponds and lakes. Crane said the calibers that are currently legal to take deer are ballistically equal to 30.06, but many cannot afford the specialty weapon. "The center-fire rifle would cheapen up the whole process for the hunter, but I'm still a muzzle loader."

Brian Manship, Milltown

Manship said he discussed the pan fish rule proposal with approximately 50 to 100 anglers, and consensus was the "25 limit would be a bad idea." Manship added that he will not go out and spend \$60 for bait, food, and gas for just 25 bluegill. Manship said he would support limiting fishing during the spawn. Manship also offered support for the amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d).

Larry Wessel, Greene County

Wessel stated that he agreed with the previous statements made regarding the proposed pan fish bag limit noting that it "doesn't hardly seem to make the trip worthwhile." Wessel recognized that there may some small lakes where the proposed 25 bag limit would be appropriate, such as Griffy Lake in Bloomington, but those would be the only exceptions he would understand. Wessel said he was in favor of the proposed use of the center-fire rifle cartridges.

Donald Crane, Jr., Lawrence County

Crane noted that the correct term, "center-fired rifle" should be referenced rather than "high powered rifle." He suggested that the .270s should be legal. He suggested language be added regarding emphasizing the use of expanding bullets or projectiles.

Tom Hess, Vincennes

Hess voiced his approval for the amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), but recommended the language be amended from the use of .243 of inch or larger to .270 of an inch or larger. He said he would be concerned with youth by themselves shooting a rifle, and the Department should add an age limit, such as 19, for those allowed to use a center-fire rifle.

Tim Hess, Knox County

Hess stated that he totally supports the center-fire rifle proposal. He added that he would like to see a cap imposed noting that sharpshooting a .300 caliber is stretching the range of what's safe.

Joe Shields, Greene County

Shields stated that he supports the center-fire rifle rule proposal noting that there are "pluses/minuses of everything" but noting overall the belief that the proposal was positive.

Bob Buston, French Lick

Buston said he agreed with the other statements regarding adding a cap to the rifle cartridge. "If you don't have a cap, you'll end up with a long list of what's legal." He said the larger calibers "are about killing power, and not necessarily how far they shoot. Once you get up to .270, you're talking a pretty long range."

Michael Reynolds, Mitchell

Reynolds stated that he supports the rule proposal allowing center-fire rifles. "I think a .243 is a good minimum caliber..." Reynolds observed that the main concern is the first shot regardless whether you are shooting a muzzle loader, a shotgun or a high powered rifle. Reynolds also commented that he bought 70 acres in 1985 and the property had "lots of grouse, I mean lots of grouse." He noted that prescribed burns are "good for grouse habitat" and said fescue does not support wildlife.

Arthur Cook, Orange County

Cooked stated that he supports the proposed rule amendment at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), and would support a limit on the larger caliber.

John Highhouse, Lawrence County

Highhouse stated that he supports the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He noted that he grew up hunting deer in northwestern Pennsylvania with high-powered rifles since the time he was 12 years old. "And in all of those years I never one time heard of a stray bullet go flying off somewhere and hitting a hunter, and the topography is nearly identical to what we have here."

Gary Dinkle, Perry County

Dinkle stated that he supports the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). "It would increase the opportunity for hunters due to better shot placement." Dinkle noted that the center-fire rifle is used for hunting coyote, and he noted he has not heard of many accidents in states where the use of these rifles is legal.

Jim Denoncour, Perry County

Denoncour said he has been hunting deer for over 50 years with every kind of weapon made. He stated that center-fire rifles are fine with him offering his belief that they "are very safe." He suggested limiting the magazine capacity, such as six shots. Denoncour noted that he is a "biologist by training" and that the 25 bag limit on pan fish is the "worst idea" he's heard adding his opinion that "it's a biological disaster."

Glen Bryant, Floyd County

Bryant stated that he supports the proposed amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d).

Todd Woods, Lawrence County

Woods stated that he supports the proposed amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He also stated his support for the increase from two to three hooks per line and pole, and the use of an individual's Customer Identification Number to identify a line or tree stand, or other equipment. Woods said he would not support the sunfish bag limit.

Dan Elmore, Celestine

Elmore stated that he owns five or six center-fire rifles, but is concerned about safety. He suggested amending 312 IAC 9-3-3(d) adding a geographic limit, such as south of Bloomington to the Ohio River. He said a center-fire rifle bullet will travel about 1,000 yards. "We need to get back to our Indiana roots."

Charles Porter, Lawrence County

Porter stated that he agreed with Elmore's statements, noting that a person cannot see a deer over 100 yards. Porter stated that he's hunted all his life and has not had a problem hunting deer with a shotgun or a muzzle loader. He stated that he did not see the need for the use of center-fire rifles.

John Duell, Greene County

Duell said he has over 200 acres in Greene, Lawrence, and Jackson Counties, and has been hunting for a number of years with shotguns, but switched over to a center-fire single-shot pistol. He noted that northern Indiana is flatter, and was concerned regarding the use of magnum rounds. Duell also stated he would support a limit on the number of bullets in a clip. "If this passes the way I read it, an AK 47 with a 30-round clip would be perfectly legal...or 300-round clip. There's no limit to the number bullets you can shoot. I think that is unsafe." He stated that "we shot out all the deer back in the '30s, and we are recovering back now." Duell noted that there are irresponsible people that do hunt and shoot. He would support the use of a .358 Winchester, .356, a 30/30, something that is not a bottleneck magnum cartridge.

Monte Myers, Orange County

Myers stated that he "was not really dead for or dead against" the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He said Indiana's population has increased, and questioned the safety of the proposal to allow how high-powered rifles to be used for deer hunting. Myers noted that he has not been anywhere in Indiana where he could not hear or see human activity. "If you can hear it and you can see it it's within rifle range...Indiana doesn't lend itself to the Plains of the West in terms of being safe distances to shoot those things." He stated that there are many qualified and responsible hunters, but noted there are many hunters that are not.

George Gray, Madison

Gray said he does not hunt grouse, but was concerned about closing the grouse season. He asked whether it was easy to bring back a season after closure. "I'm not really for doing away with hunting seasons." Gray supports the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), but was concerned about hunter numbers. He supported an increase in hunter education. He commended the DNR for opening up a youth archery season.

Scott Field, Jefferson County

Field stated that he was an avid bow hunter, and voiced his support for the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He said the proposal would increase hunting opportunities. He suggested opening a season for bobcat, and noted that he has seen a reduction in turkey and quail.

David Sipples, Jefferson County

Sipples said he was an avid bow hunter, and voiced his support for the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). "Anything that you can do...to get youth out and hunting is a good deal."

Dennis Knight, Washington County

Knight stated that he was in support of the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-39(d). "I feel just as safe in the woods with a rifle as I do with 14 deer slugs coming by me." He has hunted in about 15 states, has a lifetime license, and probably hunts 60% of all firearm days in Indiana.

Dan Moody, Martin County

Moody voiced his support for the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d)

Dan Moody, Jr., Lawrence County

Moody, Jr. stated he supported the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), but would also support magazine restrictions. He noted that Kentucky has a 10-round magazine limit. He commended the DNR for hunter safety.

Nick Brummett, Bedford

Brummett said he shoots 7 mm handgun, but a handgun is inherently inaccurate. "30.06 is more than enough." He said in the last six years he has called in three coyotes and over a dozen bobcats.

Leo Galley, Hardinsburg

Galley stated that he "has nothing against high powered rifles." He suggested increasing the fine for "not knowing what's behind your target. That way you get to hunt with your high powered rifles, but it gives you some responsibility of where the bullet goes."

Lawrence Hughes, Orange County

Hughes voiced his support for the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-39(d), but would also support an upper limit for safety.

Dan Jacobson, Orange County

Jacobson stated that he and his wife recently moved to Indiana from Wisconsin. He stated he was "very uncomfortable with the idea of shooting deer with are essentially pistol cartridges. I think it's very bad for the deer."

Mike Wade, Madison

Wade stated his support for the proposed rules amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-39(d), but encouraged others to be careful about what is beyond their target.

Zebedee Rush, Lawrence County

Rush explained his opinion that the Hunting Guide needed to be published with black lettering on a white background, or other color combination that provided good contrast to improve its readability.

Rush stated that the rules applicable to hunting deer with muzzleloaders needed to be simplified and the differences between shotgun and rifle needed to be better defined. He also noted that there needed to be consistency between the different types of firearms legal for hunting deer in terms of calibers, trajectories and ranges. Rush also expressed interest in having a primitive muzzleloader season established or having the new in-line muzzleloader incorporated into the regular firearms season.

Furthermore, Rush offered the opinion that hunter orange should be required over specified periods of time without regard for what the hunter is hunting. With respect to hunter orange Rush explained that if safety concerns require a deer hunter to wear hunter orange during a certain period of time a coyote hunter afield during that period of time should be required to take similar precautions.

March 17, 2015

Fort Harrison State Park, Garrison

Richard Rominger, Alexandria

Rominger stated that he owns a shotgun over rifle, a 12 gage over .22. "I would like to use it and be legal knowing I'm legal."

Jack Corpuz, Indianapolis

Corpuz, representing Ruffed Grouse Society, support a suspension of the grouse season for now. "We'll give you five years." He also stated that, personally, he supports the increase of the size limit of Muskie to 44 inches. Corpuz stated that he opposes the amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d) as written, but is not opposed to calibers that have been proposed with the minimum being .243. "Unfortunately, there's no maximum caliber listed...and it's a loophole in the system and it needs to be closed." He noted that some states, such as Illinois, Ohio, and Lower Michigan, do not allow the use of equipment for deer hunting as what is being proposed in Indiana. He also noted that Kentucky allows center-fire rifles, but allows use of lower calibers than Indiana is proposing. "I think there needs to be more thought put into this provision, and I would like to see it pushed back at least year and some effort put into thinking about what we are going to be turning loose on the landscape." Corpuz stated that Pennsylvania used to or may currently

prohibit the use of auto-loading rifles, and rifles had to be manually operated, bolt-action, lever-action, single-action, or pumps. He said the DNR needs to put some thought into magazine capacity and the operation of the firearm. Corpuz said that an individual can now purchase a bump fire stock, which essentially turns the gun virtually into an automatic weapon. "You can unload a 30-round magazine with that pump fire stock, pulling the trigger and holding it back and just rocking the gun. It's just going to be like a machinegun out there. We need to close these loopholes for safety's sake and for the resource. We don't need people out there shooting six to eight deer in one sitting." He concluded by asking the rule proposal be delayed.

Ed Kassig, Indianapolis

Kassig voiced his support for the closing of the grouse season in order to give the grouse population time to recover. He commented that some lakes get "dinged pretty hard, like Willow Slough and Summit" regarding pan fish, but said he would not support the proposed state-wide bag limit. Kassig noted that Highway 26 is the cut off for walleye, but "that would affect naturally spawning fish in the lower Tippecanoe. He stated he was in favor of the idea of the lakes where they stock them, but maybe bump that line up to Highway 14. Kassig stated that he was "generally opposed" to the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). Kassig noted that he hunts with a black power muzzle loader, and said that he "wants to be able to see where that bullet is going to kiss the dirt should I miss." He also noted that Indiana townships are six miles wide, and the .06 will carry six miles. Kassig noted there are too many places where there is something in your backdrop, that, God forbid, you miss. He said a shotgun slug is heavy, but the rate of fall of the slug drops 30 ft/s.

Jimmy Mays, Indianapolis

Mays suggested a bounty be re-established for coyote.

Arch Alexander, West Lafayette

Alexander stated that the proposed rule amendment to reduce bag limit for Blue Gill to 25 in combination with all other sunfish, and that "seems like a very drastic reduction without some solid reason. I've not heard of any problems ever in my life of Blue Gills having any trouble maintaining a population. In my experience, it's always been the opposite; they seem to overpopulate." Alexander said he would be opposed to the amendment, "particularly when you say it's in combination with any other sunfish." He voiced his support for the proposed amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), and noted that safety is a big concern for all kinds of hunting. Alexander also noted that when pistol calibers were being proposed, "I heard a lot of doomsday stuff...As far as I know in the interim time I haven't of any accidents that are something other than falling out of a tree stand and breaking a leg...I think this new proposal is more of the same. I haven't heard a single argument other than these wild speculations...We already have bullets that travel two or three miles shot out of the guns we have now." Alexander observed that youth have difficulty firing shotguns correctly because of the kick, but there are alternatives to shotguns but "I'd like to see more alternatives...There are a lot of alternatives out there that are just out of reach right now" such as a 30/30. Alexander stated that the rule proposal to allow center-fire rifles will not change the way an individual hunts. "The bullet may go farther, but the hunter controls where the bullet goes."

Greg Hopper, Plainfield

Hopper voiced his support for the 25 bag limit of Blue Gill. "I don't think we need to be depleting Blue Gills that are on the nest and circumstances like that." Hopper stated that he was "neutral or on the fence" regarding the proposed amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He noted that there is an underlying safety issue, but rifles are allowed to take other wildlife.

Dennis Mitchel, Fishers

Mitchel said he was opposed to the proposed state-wide 25 bag limit on Blue Gill, but would support a bag limit on a lake by lake basis as needed.

Bob Wayman, Zionsville

Wayman said he remembers Indiana's first deer season, where a 10 gage shotgun "or just about anything." He noted that today's shotgun slugs are manufactured and the velocity capability, are not that different. Wayman suggested that Indiana DNR review the regulations of Michigan and Kentucky where the longer rifle bullets are allowed. "I, for one, cannot see why the 30/30 is not legal in the state of Indiana, and then let the experts go beyond that. I'm not too sure in Indiana we need a 30.06 or a 7 mm mag or anything like I use in Montana or Wyoming to go deer hunting. But I do think Indiana should have the privilege of using a rifle of that caliber to hunt deer with in this state. It would be a lot better for the deer population. I don't think we are going to kill neighbors or anything else with those rifles." He suggested the conservation officers review the size of revolver or pistol that are allowed to be carried. He said Indiana needs review the size of the caliber and increase it "rather than just this crappy little stuff that we've got right now." Wayman also stated that the shotgun slug's size should also be reviewed.

Mike Voss, Anderson

Voss said he has been a hunter for over 30 years, and stated that "proficiency is our problem in Indiana and topography." He said Indiana is very flat and open, and some of the capabilities of the ballistics of the rifles being proposed to be introduced into "our hunting environment carry for miles and I'm afraid our proficiency might not be up to that standard." Voss agreed that there should be a limit on rounds. "It looks like to me we are killing over 10,000 deer a year right now. So we are pretty well denting the herd...without the addition of these so called 'high powered rifles.' My issue is safety."

John Christopher, Indianapolis

Christopher stated that he was primarily concerned about the safety of the use of the proposed firearms. "Generally speaking, at first I was totally opposed to the idea of having high powered rifles in the woods around me. I read the Pennsylvania Study, and it kind of gave me consideration that perhaps high powered rifles were actually less dangerous than shotguns. So my general consensus and conclusion is that perhaps high powered rifles are actually safer." He supported amending the rule proposal to include a maximum caliber limit.

Joseph Durham, Indianapolis

Durham voiced his support for the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), but noted he was concerned about the use of a 30-round clip by some individuals.

Steve Prior, Poland

Prior stated that he supports the rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), but emphasized that there needs to be more input for any decisions made regarding the use of fully automatic weapons, 30-round clips, and other equipment needs to be addressed.

Mark Wright, Greenwood

Wright stated that he is an avid hunter and a NRA instructor. "I think this really comes down to personal accountability. You guys all know that firearms are firearms whether it's a rifle or shotgun. You can hurt somebody if you are not in the right place and not being safe. So, I think it is ridiculous that we can hunt squirrels and rabbits with any kind of center-fire rifle, but we can't hunt deer with it." Wright noted that he would like to see the proposed rule amendment be adopted with future amendments if needed. Wright also noted that he would be comfortable with some type of actual ammunition round limit. He commented that a shotgun slug will penetrate more brush than a center-file rifle.

Michael Stitt, Frankfort

Stitt voiced his opposition to the proposed amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He said Indiana has flat counties and "has no business having that kind of power." He commented that center-fire rifles will not be allowed in urban deer zone due to the residential population, schools, and businesses.

Tom Shevlot, Bedford

Shevlot stated he owns acreage in Greene County, and voiced his support, from a harvest perspective, for the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He commented that the studies and research demonstrate that an animal shot with a center-fire rifle has a higher degree of likelihood of being harvested and captured and retained then using a slug. Shevlot noted that DNR issued bonus permits for those with crop damage and center-fire rifles were allowed for taking deer, as well as taking coyote. "With respect to terrain in southern Indiana, I think it is kind of a non-issue."

Gary Walters, Indianapolis

Walters said he supported the 25 bag limit on Blue Gill "is smart...More people are fishing and that means we need to share a little bit. We want to keep the resource there." Walters noted that he owns two farms in Parke County, and emphasized that he is a conservationist not a preservationist. He voiced opposition to the proposed rule amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-3(d), because the proposal "has not been looked at fully....size of magazines, size of calibers, all those things need to be taken into consideration and addressed." Walters said that where hunters have access the deer herd has decreased. He reflected that there was a record deer harvest in 2012, but in 2013 the harvest dropped 8%. "Being a conservationist, I want some of these resources for my grandkids. I want them to be able enjoy what I grew up with...We're hammering the deer herd over three months a year." Walters said that consideration of the resource is necessary, and the resource needs to have "safe avenue or safe sanctuaries. It can't be open season like on one of my particular farms and a 17-acre food plot and be able to shoot 400 or 500 yards...to me that takes a lot of hunting skill out of it and puts the animal at an unfair advantage with the amount of hunting pressure we have in the access areas." Walters said that where deer herds are starting to decline the Department should not be looking at more ways to take deer, but looking to stabilizing the herd. He said the allowance of center-file rifles will not make much of an impact

on attracting new hunters. Walters noted that his grandson was able to take a deer with a 12 gage shotgun without the kick. Walters voiced his opposition to the proposed rule amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-4(d), which increase the bag limit from four does to ten does and the deer reduction zone is set based on the DNR's director. "He's going to basically have a mandate to...make a square mile around my farm a deer reduction zone based on the way the language is worded." Walter said that where hunters have access "you don't see the deer there anymore, very few deer, but a lot of other places where there is no access this rule is not going to address the issue of too many deer."

Tim Krute, Indianapolis

Krute noted that he originates from upstate New York and there was a rifle season and a shotgun season "be it northern or southern. From my opinion, there is no problem between the two. I'm all for it." He noted that his shotgun has nine shells in it, but "I've never used nine shells here hunting." He also noted that he lives on deer meat. "I eat what I shoot...I'm shooting deer to eat." Krute said that he would support an amendment to limit shot capacity. He commented that DNR "knows where the deer problems are. They know what they are doing when it comes to deer reductions." He said, "No machine guns; let's just be deer hunters." Krute said he is opposed to the elimination of the metal tag used in check-in stations.

Kevin Brady, Indianapolis

Brady voiced his support for the proposed amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d).

Lloyd Arnold, Leavenworth

Arnold stated that he supported the proposed amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He said there is a safety priority no matter the caliber or weapon being used in the field. Arnold stated that the urban deer zone allows DNR administrative flexibility in addressing deer population in reduction zones. He said it would have been easier to instruct his sons to hunt with a 30/30.

Herb Higgins, Greenwood

Higgins stated that he opposed the proposed amendments at 312 IAC 9-3-3(d). He said DNR has worked "extremely hard getting Indiana to be a 'big buck' state." He noted that Indiana is second in the number of harvested white-tailed deer. "That speaks to how we manage our herd...and the potential Indiana has." He said the proposed amendment will impact the age structure of the deer herd significantly. He also noted that people are becoming more comfortable with the mechanisms in which DNR manages Indiana's deer herd, such as deer reduction zone, but the proposed rule amendments may increase fears.

March 25, 2015

Department of Natural Resources Northeast Regional Headquarters

John Hawkins, Merrillville Lake

Hawkins stated that he a former hunter education instructor. He offered that with the addition of longer range weapons like the proposed high fire rifles comes greater responsibility. He expressed concern that many who will use the weapon will make the effort to become proficient with its use noting that there are not many ranges available for practicing long distance shots. Hawkins observed also that not everyone will be willing to make the effort to follow up at

tracking or retrieving deer shot at much longer ranges. Hawkins concluded, "Its Indiana folks, sorry, we don't need this."

Rick Whiteleather, Whitley County

Whiteleather stated opposition to the addition of high fire rifles for taking deer adding the opinion that allowing a .30-06 in the customary small wooded tracts in Indiana is "looking for trouble." Whiteleather also offered opposition to the 25 fish bag limit proposed with respect to Blue Gill. He added that many of his neighbors who are not able to fish themselves benefit from his ability to take extra fish to give away.

Cory Briner, Noble County

Briner is opposed to the proposal to add high power rifles as a weapon for taking deer. He stated that he is afraid for his own safety in light of the fact that he resides in a house on a hill beside a 30 acres of woods. Briner offered support for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.

Shannon Brown, Dekalb County

Brown stated that he is totally against the use of higher caliber rifles for taking deer. He stated that most deer Indiana are killed within 75 yards noting that there are many available weapons, including shotguns and smaller caliber rifles and pistols, that will allow deer to be taken at even 200 – 250 yards and expressed the opinion that shooting deer at 300, 400 or 500 yard is not needed. Brown added that the way the proposal was made there is no "upper limit to the calibers" observing that a 50 caliber could be used. Brown concluded that "residences and people are just too close for that."

TJ Unger, Allen County

Unger posed questions for the NRC's consideration and urged the NRC to explain to the public the background for the rule proposal to allow high power rifles. Unger questioned, "Is it population control, is it increased hunter success, or is it increased revenue?" Unger noted that he has hunted deer in Indiana for the past 26 years and during that time has noticed a change in the population. Unger stated that from personal observation the effectiveness of the deer reduction efforts is "readily apparent" noting further that the DNR has reported population reduction in the deer herds as well. Unger noted Indiana Deer Biologist Chad Stewart as reflecting that only certain factors impacting the deer population, including seasons and weaponry, are controlled by the Department. Unger observed that DNR records reveal that every year the firearms season coincides with peak rut activity and that 75% of Indiana's 270,000 deer hunters are firearms hunters only. Unger noted that these aggressive deer reduction efforts are rapidly reducing Indiana's deer populations and encouraged the state to move towards managing deer for sustaining healthy populations instead of continuing to pursue "outdated" aggressive reduction efforts. In Unger's view, the addition of high power rifles is not consistent with managing sustainable populations of deer but would further enhance the aggressive deer reduction efforts.

Unger noted further that any addition of higher caliber weapons highlights the importance of hunter education, which has seen funding cuts and more online courses. Unger added that presently hunters who have been exempted from or who have previously completed hunter education will be allowed to hunt with a weapon that adds and entirely new set of risks without

need for additional hunter safety education directed towards those risks. Unger observed that hunter education is only required for individuals between 12 and 28 years of age while the majority of hunters are of the average age of 46.

Unger expressed strong opposition to the proposal seeking for the NRC and the DNR to consider neighboring states such as Kansas, Iowa and Ohio who have successful and profitable deer hunting programs in terms of weaponry, education requirements as well as season dates in developing an entirely new strategy.

Unger added that if the proposal does move forward the NRC should contemporaneously improve upon hunter education requirements and adjust the hunting seasons towards sustaining healthy populations instead of population reduction.

Carrie Goodrich, Noble County

Goodrich is a 35 year employee of "Mary Lake", a 1200 acre environmental education center that already experiences poaching. He expressed fear for those who have tree stands just on the borders of the facility from a person who slips into the property without permission. Goodrich observed that muzzleloaders and shotguns with ranges of 100 – 150 yards already pose problems but with a longer range rifle a person might be shot "right out of a tree." Goodrich also noted that there are 8,000 – 10,000 visitors using 8.5 miles of trails with stands aimed into the property. Goodrich stated that they have experienced shots being made over the heads of guests by accident.

Chris Mitchell, Grant County

Mitchell offered support for the proposed addition of high power rifles for hunting deer. He observed that the use of these weapons will provide greater opportunity and are presently used for many other types of hunting without significant reporting of accidents.

Tonya Knapp, Whitley County

Knapp stated opposition for the expansion to high power rifles for taking deer.

Brett Bailey, Whitley County

Bailey stated disfavor for the high power rifle proposal explaining that deer populations are already very low. He offered agreement with the proposed amendment to remove the requirement that landowner permission to take coyotes must be in writing. Bailey also opposed the 25 fish bag limit proposed for Blue Gill.

Dave Shively, Claypool, Indiana

Shively stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal on the basis of safety and low deer population. Shively added that he had polled 17 hunters with respect to the distance at which they had taken deer this year. The average of those polled was 78 yards. Shively stated "you don't need a high powered rifle to shoot 78 yards."

Sam Whitaker, Kosciusko County

Whitaker reported that he has been a law enforcement officer for 36 years. When on patrol he routinely saw holes shot through houses with the weapons presently allowed for deer hunting

presently. Whitaker noted that these types of incidents are not reflected as hunting accidents. Whitaker stated it is a safety problem and is a detriment to the deer herd. Whitaker stated that he maintains approximately 16 acres of feed plots and even in the middle of the winter with snow on the ground there are no deer on those plots. Whitaker also observed that Indiana allows the hunting of deer with a gun 42 days while Ohio has only an 11 day firearm season. Furthermore, Whitaker stated the opinion that deer reduction efforts have become too aggressive and this effort is being pursued to the detriment of Indiana's deer herds.

Charles Lovely, Kosciusko County

Lovely stated opposition to the 25 fish Blue Gill limit and also opposed the proposal to allow high power rifles in Indiana. He added that he used to hunt but quit because he was nearly shot.

Dan Lock, Noble County

Lock stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal.

Laura Williams, Columbia City

Williams expressed opposition the 25 fish limit for Blue Gill.

Janice Webster, Columbia City

Webster expressed opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the 25 fish limit for Blue Gill.

Tim Lawton, Columbia City

Lawton expressed opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the 25 fish limit for Blue Gill.

George Webster, Columbia City

Webster expressed opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the 25 fish limit for Blue Gill.

Rodney Scott, Syracuse

Scott stated disfavor for the high power rifle proposal for taking deer stating concern that cars, houses, animals or people will be shot because the bullets carry too far. Scott said, "Someone is going to get killed." Scott also expressed opposition to the change in the Muskie size limit from 36 inches to 44 inches. Scott questioned why a predator fish was allowed to be introduced stating that bringing Muskie to Indiana's lakes has "ruined our lakes." Scott further reported that he used to catch 5 – 6 pound bass in Webster Lake "all the time" and now he can hardly get a "keeper".

George Abel, Auburn

Abel stated that he opposes both the use of high power rifle for hunting deer and the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.

Abel also reported that he recently was fishing with family in reclamation areas near Evansville and noted that the Blue Gill do not have enough food encouraging the DNR to feed the fish.

Francis Abel, Auburn

Abel offered opposition to the use of high power rifles for hunting deer stating the opinion that more people will be killed with them than animals. She also stated disfavor for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.

David Bowers, Allen County

Bowers stated that he was a hunter safety education instructor and was in charge of the shotgun shooting sports program for the Allen County 4H program and has hunted deer for 45 years. He stated there is no reason to start hunting deer with high caliber rifles. Bowers also stated opposition to the 25 fish Blue Gill limit noting his knowledge of studies conducted by the DNR at its Martinsville Hatchery that revealed it made no difference how many Blue Gill are removed from the waters. He urged the DNR to go back and review that study.

Bowers also noted that he has been checking in harvested deer for many years and offered that the information required to be recorded by hunters on the piece of paper ("transportation ticket") is not being completed and the ones that are prepared get wet, bloody, unreadable, etc. Bowers also inquired whether check in station operators will now be using electronic check in as well. Linnea Petercheff confirmed that was the intent of that rule proposal. Bowers also stated that the hunters want those metal tags even though they had already checked in their deer electronically because they have been collecting those metal tickets all his life.

Gary Bontrager, Noble County

Bontrager was a conservation officer for 35 years who acknowledged that probably one or two houses or barns were shot annually during deer season. However, he offered that most hunters hunt from elevated positions and observed that hunting deer with pistols of .243 caliber or larger is legal. Bontrager added the opinion that high caliber pistol are less accurate than the same calibers out of a rifle and he saw no problem with the use of a high power rifle. Bontrager offered acceptance that the fisheries biologists have a reason for proposing the 25 fish Blue Gill limit or they would not have proposed it so he wanted to offer support for that proposal as well.

Danny Blotkamp, Noble County

Blotkamp offered opposition to both the high power rifle proposal and the 25 fish limit on Blue Gills

Jack Hostetler, Wolf Lake

Hostetler stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal noting that deer hunters have all the weapons they need to take deer. He added that deer populations are declining and the lack of deer will have a serious impact on the desire of young people to engage in hunting sports.

Roman Schwartz, Adams County

Swartz offered opposition to the high power rifle proposal for the reason that in the last 3 years he has seen a significant decline in deer populations. Swartz similarly offered strong opposition to the 25 fish limit on Blue Gill. Swartz stated that his small family vacations for a week on a 1000 acre lake for fishing. He stated that in 2 days the fishing portion of the vacation would be over because they had met the allowable limit. Swartz also noted that with a 1,000 acre lake the limit proposed would allow the taking of only 2.5 fish for 100 acres of water per day.

David Schwartz, Adams County

Swartz stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the 25 fish limit on Blue Gills

Glen Burry, Adams County

Burry stated that he has been a certified hunter safety education instructor since 1996 and is a board member with the Indiana Wildlife Federation. Burry provided a written comment with respect to the high power rifle proposal and the amendments associated with the urban deer zones.

Carl Guisinger, Allen County

Guisinger explained that he owns 40 acres in Steuben County; he owns property in Whitley County and has hunted for nearly 50 years. He stated that high power rifles are not needed. Guisinger reported an incident that occurred with a friend who lives approximately one half mile from the Allen County Isaac Walton from which a bullet shot at a target traveled through the target reaching the friend's home continued traveling through four walls until it lodged in a mirror just above his daughter's head. He stated that it is too dangerous for vehicles and homes and poses to great a safety concern.

Dave Erdley, Noble County

Erdley stated that he is opposed to the high power rifle rule proposal. He offered that he has mixed feeling about the bag limit for Blue Gill indicating that he would like to have more information. Erdley offered support for the amendment eliminating the need for written permission from a landowner to take coyotes.

Richard Shaffer, Noble County

Shaffer offered opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the bag limit for Blue Gill.

Greg Eley, Grant County

Eley stated that he is not in favor of the high power rifle proposal out of a concern for public safety and the potential for the use of high power rifles to further decrease already observable declines in deer populations.

Brooks Langeloh, Whitley County

Langeloh stated that he is against the high power rifle proposal. Langeloh acknowledged that rifles are allowed for use in other types of hunting without limitation, however stated that the opinion that there are not that many people hunting for coyotes or other species for which that is allowed. He also acknowledged that smokeless muzzle loaders can shoot as far as the high power rifles being proposed but noted again that there are many fewer hunters hunting with those muzzle loaders. Furthermore, with a muzzle loading weapon he stated that there is only one available shot, which prevents the ability to continue shooting at a deer on the run possibly losing sight of what lies beyond the deer when those later shots are taken. Langeloh offered his belief that the average hunter would probably be safe and ethical in the use of a high power rifle to take deer observing that his primary concern focused on the below average hunter or "weekend warrior". He also noted that while there are states that allow the use of high power rifles the states there are an equal number of neighboring states, such as Illinois, Ohio and the southern portion of Michigan that do not. Langeloh stated the belief that Indiana's topography is

more similar to those states than to Kentucky, northern Michigan and Pennsylvania. Furthermore, Langeloh offered that the deer population is in a down trend so the addition of available weaponry is not needed to enhance opportunities. With respect to the position that allowing high power rifles will increase hunter opportunity, Langeloh offered that his children will not be allowed to hunt if the proposal is approved.

Don Williams, Whitley County

Williams thanked the Department of Natural Resources for the valuable work that they do. He recognized that a bag limit for Blue Gill may be needed but offered the opinion that the proposed bag limit of 25 is "extreme". Williams also offered that most hunters try to be safe but just like driving a car there are good drivers and bad drivers. Williams noted that there are more cars killing people than guns. He noted that if the proposal is adopted he has a gun or two that he might use but Williams acknowledged that long range shooting at deer was not appropriate.

Jeff Slain, Whitley County

Slain stated his opposition to the Blue Gill bag limit. Slain offered that he ice fishes five to six days a week in the winter loading his freezer because he doesn't fish in the summer and he gives a lot a fish away. He added that in the late 1960s or early 1970s the bag limit was lifted because it had no effect then. Slain relayed that two friends who were retired fisheries biologists at Tri Lake stated that it was impossible to fish the lake out. He encouraged the Department of Natural Resources to publicize any study that has been relied upon to substantiate the need or usefulness of the proposed bag limit. Slain expressed his understanding that the Department staff believes that technology advances have increased the ability of anglers to take fish and contested the Department's conclusion that technological enhancements are having any impact upon fish. Slain also cited safety concerns for his opposition to the high power rifle rule.

Bruce McClure, Kosciusko County

McClure questioned why there was a need for the 25 Blue Gill bag limit. He suggested that eliminating fishing during spawning season might be more effective than instituting the proposed bag limit.

Gary Young, Whitley County

Young stated that he could "go either way" with the high power rifle proposal. Young added that hunters can be "just as dangerous with a shotgun as anything" noting that it is the operator of the firearm that is paramount. Gill Young offered that he disfavors the proposed bag limit for the Blue Gill unless someone can justify a need for it.

Kent Davis, Whitley County

Davis stated opposition to the proposed bag limit for Blue Gill. He stated, "The problem is that DNR is out there netting our lakes taking them up to [inaudible] and feeding them to the Tiger Muskies."

Gary Enos, North Webster

Enos stated that he owns and operates "Indiana Muskie Experience" and offered support for the change to the Muskie size limit from 36" to 44" on Webster Lake. Enos encouraged that this limit be made statewide.

Tyson Key, Dekalb County

Key offered support for the change to the Muskie size limit adding that the change should be instituted state-wide. Key added that he has fished an area lake for four years and reported that the Muskie has improved the crappie, perch and Blue Gill being caught from that lake.

Bill Lavigne, Fort Wayne

Lavigne supported the proposed 16" size limit on Walleye north of Highway 26 adding the belief that the limit should be imposed at all locations where the Department of Natural Resources is stocking fingerlings including lakes and the Elkhart River. Lavigne offered that under the proposed rule there is a 15" size limit for portions of the Elkhart River while there is a 16" limit for other portions of the same river, which, in his opinion, placed an undue hardship on the conservation officers with respect to enforcement. Lavigne favors a more uniform 16" size limit.

Jason Betz, DeKalb County

Betz offered support for the 16" Walleye limit as proposed. However, he requested that the proposed change effecting Wall Lake be eliminated from the proposal.

Steve Neher, Allen County

Neher offered support for the high power rifle proposal stating that they are not any worse than the shotguns or any other weapon presently available. He stated that he does have a problem with the proposal because it does not presently include a limit on the number of bullets or other magazine capacity restriction. Neher encouraged that a magazine capacity limit of 5 or 6 rounds be added. Neher stated that the bag limit for Blue Gill should only be imposed on problem lakes or should be addressed with limits applicable to spawning season.

Ron Sides, Noble County

Sides stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal adding that magazine or round limits should be imposed upon shotguns and all firearms presently allowed for hunting deer. Sides stated the belief that more information was needed in order to make an informed decision about the bag limits on Blue Gill.

Michael Jaworski, South Bend

Jaworski stated that he is a former Hunter Education Safety Instructor and is a 4H shooting sports instructor who offered support for the high power rifle proposal. Jaworski explained that presently he has a .243 with an 18 inch barrel that is legal for taking deer in the firearms season as a "pistol" but also has a .243 with a 22 inch barrel that is not legal for taking deer because the barrel length causes the latter weapon to be considered a rifle. Jaworski stated that the additional availability of high power rifles for hunting deer, when these rifles are already legal for hunting other species, will allow a greater number of people to hunt deer without other impacts. Jaworski noting that it is the hunter's duty to be responsible, to practice and to know the firearm they are using and the property they are hunting on.

Jaworski also offers support for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gills and the increase in size for Muskie. Jaworski stated that the Blue Gill and other fish are larger now because of the Muskie

and offered that the increased Muskie size limit should be not only for Webster Lake but also for the Barbie Chain.

Rich Swain, Webster

Swain stated that he is a homeowner on Webster Lake and is a member of, and is speaking on behalf of, the Hoosier Muskie Hunters. Swain offered support for the 44" size limit for Muskie stating that the limit should be implemented statewide. He added that Michigan has gone to a 50" size limit and also requires an additional tag.

Nicki Swain, Webster

Swain stated that she is a homeowner of Webster Lake who supports the Muskie size limit as proposed.

Randy Clouse, Warsaw

Clouse offered opposition to the proposed high power rifle rule. Clouse stated uncertainty with respect to what exact bag limit should be imposed for Blue Gill but agreed that some type of restriction was appropriate.

Keith Darlington, Webster

Darlington offered that he is a homeowner on Webster Lake and stated support for the Muskie size increase. He added that the area has benefitted financially from out of state anglers and encouraged the establishment of a "trophy" program. Darlington questioned how the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill was developed and encouraged further study.

Shea Dolsen, Webster

Dolsen stated that he is a property owner on Webster Lake who operates a fishing guide service and rentals properties. Dolsen also serves on the Board of Directors of the West Lake Muskie Club. He offered his and the club's supports the increase in the size of Muskie. Dolsen added his belief that the change will be beneficial in many ways, including putting Indiana "on the map for being a good Muskie fishery."

Scott Miller, Huntington County

Miller stated opposition to the high power rifle rule echoing the reasons offered by others who had already offered comments.

Curt Lindsey, North Webster

Lindsey identified himself as a nuisance wild animal control operator stating that he opposes the ability of landowners to remove nuisance wild animals. Lindsey acknowledged that landowner's elimination of their own nuisance wildlife impacts his livelihood but added that many landowners are unsafe in their actions. Lindsey stated opposition for the high power rifle proposal. Lindsey stated support for the increase Muskie size limit noting that he has seen increased size bass and other species as a result of the Muskie program. He also noted the financial benefit to the area of the Muskie program. Lindsey also offered support for the bag limit on Blue Gill.

Betty Busch, Syracuse

Vice President of the [inaudible] Lake Preservation Association, Bush stated that the bass rule needed to be returned to the way it used to be. Bush added that there are too many tournaments allowed on the lakes. Bush offered support for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill. Bush stated that if hunting with rifles is going to be allowed there needs to be very strict regulations because without that the young people “don’t know which end of the gun the bullet goes in.”

Chuck Jordan,

Jordan identified himself as the President of the Isaac Walton League of Allen County. He stated concern about declining deer populations and the decreased chance for bucks to grow to “Boone & Crocket” size. Jordan observed that will more powerful weapons comes greater responsibility. He recalled the incident in which a stray bullet shot at the Isaac Walton League traveled “nearly a mile” and through a house lodging near a young girl inside a home in echoing concerns about the incidental shooting of houses. Jordon concluded stating that high power rifles are not needed for taking deer.

Patrick Jordan, Allen County

Jordan expressed disappointment in the Department of Natural Resources actions in increasing deer seasons, enhancing the availability of weapons, allowing higher quotas and bag limits in such rapid succession that it has become impossible to quantify the impact of the changes. Jordan observed that Indiana allows 42 days of firearm hunting for deer and offered that we do not need any more changes. Additionally, Jordan observed that only a few people have the ability to hunt deer with smokeless muzzle loaders having the ability to travel 500 yards because the weapons cost nearly \$1500. Indiana was identified as the only state responding to a survey as having greater deer hunting opportunities than five or 10 years ago. Jordan also recalled the surveys conducted by the Department of Natural Resources in 2004 and 2010 that indicated over 70% of hunters responding in the last survey that their most significant concern was the ethics of other hunters. Jordan questioned the appropriateness of adding high power rifles to the available weaponry when hunters are already concerned about what their fellow hunters are doing. Jordan challenged the Department of Natural Resources’ conclusion that the addition of high power rifles is not a population management issue. He suggested that the Department of Natural Resources obtain an accurate assessment of Indiana’s deer population in order to have direct data to work with.

Jim Embrey, Allen County

Embrey stated that he is Vice President of the Isaac Walton League of Fort Wayne. He questioned the accuracy of Indiana’s estimated deer population based upon kill reports. Embrey expressed concern about taking young people to the woods if the high power rifle proposal is approved. Embrey offered the belief that many parents will prohibit their children from participating if this proposal moves forward. He added his belief that the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission are putting money ahead of ethics and safety. Embrey concluded that the proposal needs to be stopped.

Dean Sheetz, Noble County

Sheetz stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal and the bag limit on Blue Gill.

Charles Shively, Noble County

Shively offered opposition for the high power rifle proposal and the bag limit on Blue Gill. Shively suggested that possibly a slot limit for Walleye and Muskie would be more appropriate.

Mark Shafer, Whitley County

Shafer stated that he is opposed to the proposal to allow high power rifles for deer hunting adding his interest in seeing some of the pressure removed from the deer herd.

Todd Sawter, Kosciusko County

Sawter stated that he is an investigator with the Kosciusko County Sheriff's Department who is personally aware of many cases of homes and cars shot during deer season. Sawter acknowledged that guns don't kill people, it is people who kill people but he offered the opinion that too many irresponsible people are running around with guns. Sawter offered that allowing high power rifles for hunting deer is irresponsible. Sawter added that he is also the owner of a bait and tackle store in North Webster who favors the increase in Muskie size limit. Sawter noted that Muskie has been good for business noting that he has sold fishing licenses to people from outside the United States. Sawter stated that there are "monster" bass in "Tippy" and the Barbie chain so the Muskie is not problematic.

Jim Grey, Whitley County

Grey stated that he hunts several pieces of property and has approximately 14 tree stands out. He is aware of a house in the vicinity of one of those stands that he cannot see but a bullet from a high power rifle could reach. Grey advised that he has a granddaughter who he would like to take hunting.

Gary Meyer, DeKalb County

Meyer stated that he owns property in Noble, DeKalb and Steuben Counties. He stated that he has observed a steady decline in deer populations seeing fewer deer this year than in 1981 despite hunting every day of bow and firearms season in 2014. Meyer opposes the high power rifle proposal.

Jim DeHoff, Wells County

DeHoff stated that deer populations are declining offering opposition to the high power rifle proposal. He also stated disfavor for the bag limit on Blue Gill.

Randy Busch, Kosciusko County

Busch opposed the high power rifle and Blue Gill bag limit proposals.

Todd Paterson, Allen County

Patterson offered that he is a lifelong resident who has hunted in Indiana for 35 years and who possesses a lifetime hunting license. Patterson stated that he hunts with nearly all available equipment and has hunted for elk deer, bear and other species in the western U.S. and Canada and recognizes that high power rifles "do have their place, flat and populated Indiana is not one of them." Patterson observed that smokeless muzzle loaders are one shot weapons that very few hunters use while with high power rifles there will be many hunters with many shots. He observed that any shot over 200 yards is unethical regardless of the weapon. Patterson agreed that northern Michigan and Pennsylvania allow the use of high power rifles but characterized

these areas as densely forested with low populations. Patterson also challenged the Department of Natural Resources' conclusion that the addition of the high power rifle will not impact deer populations. He added that he will likely stop hunting in Indiana if the proposal is approved and urged the Natural Resources Commission not to cater to the insurance company lobby.

Patterson encouraged the institution of a 3 cartridge maximum should be imposed upon all firearms used for deer hunting, the elimination of the electronic check-in system and a decrease in the deer quotas.

Laryn Spaw, Fort Wayne

Spaw offered opposition to the Blue Gill bag limit proposal offering that a limitation during spawning season would be more appropriate.

Eric Denangelo, DeKalb County

Denangelo stated that he is from Pennsylvania where there is "vast forest" and the ability to travel for hours without seeing anything or anyone. He stated that high power rifles will shoot through a deer and the bullet will continue traveling. Denangelo questioned, "How many lives does it take?" He also observed that Indiana's deer population is collapsing noting that he saw five deer all of the past deer season. Denangelo stated, "Enough is enough" characterizing the late archery season as "insane."

Dan Reebe, Noble County

Reebe stated opposition for the high power rifle proposal adding that the present gun season scares him. Reebe explained that he is a bow hunter.

Randy Hovarter, Noble County

Hovarter noted that he has been hunting deer since the early 1970s when high power rifles were not allowed because Indiana was considered to be too populated. Horvater observed that the population has only grown since the 1970 and high power rifles should not be allowed now for the same reason.

Derrick Lough, Noble County

Lough stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal, particularly for the northern part of the state. Lough also offered opposition to the 25 fish limit on Blue Gill.

Casey Meyers, Albion

Meyers stated that he is an avid fisherman and there are "zero facts" to support the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill. Meyers stated that only 2 lakes have been studied and neither were glacier lakes. Meyers noted that fishing is declining with fewer and fewer licenses being sold. Meyers contested the conclusion of the Department of Natural Resources is impacting the fishery. There is no scientific evidence that this change needs to be made and encouraged more study be conducted.

Dexter Lutter, Noble County

Lutter stated that he opposes the high power rifle proposal. He compared the energies of four weapons the first being the 50 caliber muzzle loader. Lutter explained that after being

“launched” from approximately 43” high sighted in at 100 yards “it comes back down around 500 yards. At 100 yards of fall past that you’re at 1150 to 1200 yards it hits the ground and becomes inert.” By example Lutter explained that because of its “massive size” using a one mile block the projectile is inert at just beyond the half way point of the block. Lutter explained that the 2007 pistol caliber rifle cartridges were limited as to powder capacity to prevent the ability to shoot a long bullet at any velocity. Lutter explained that those bullets “ran about 2600 – 2700 feet per second” with a “short little pluggy bullet”. “It lost at 43” of sight-in at 100 yards about 1400 yards...it not only loses that 43 minutes we’ve given it; it falls another 100 feet, hits the ground and becomes inert.” Today a Remington 7mm Ultra Mag can be purchased at Walmart. “With a 43 minute elevation change at 100 yards it becomes sighted in at 1720 yards...1760 yards is one mile.” Lutter explained that two people have commissioned the building of .375 Allen at \$8,500, the most powerful weapon he has ever worked with; “it dwarfs a .50 caliber Browning machine gun cartridge”, because of this high power rifle proposal.

Lutter explained that a .375 Allen “sighted in at 43” high at 100 yards this rifle is sighted in...the projectile comes back to zero at 2000 yards.” Lutter offered that he is also working on a gun possessing 100 pounds of kinetic energy at 1000 yards.” He stated it is “any” that needs to be addressed, adding that it isn’t the .243 that he is concerned about. “The issue is ballistic efficiency and powder capacity. As long as you keep the powder capacity small you cannot shoot a high BC bullet at a velocity fast enough to get where you’re going. It becomes inert at about 1400 yards after it falls 100 feet below its line of sight.”

Lutter stated that he is a farmer from Noble County but has also been building guns since he was a freshman in high school. Lutter offered that the rifles allowed by the increase implemented in 2012 are “iffy” suggesting that a reversion back to the rifle calibers originally allowed in 2007 would be appropriate.

Michele Baisden, Noble County

Baisden stated opposition to the Blue Gill bag limit and support for the high power rifle proposal.

Cecil Baisden, Noble County

Baisden offered support for the high power rifle proposal and opposition for the proposed 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.

Todd Anderson, Whitley County

Anderson offered disfavor for the high power rifle proposal.

Rick Green, Whitley County

Green stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal.

Ed Brown, Whitley County

Brown identified himself as a retired Department of Natural Resources Fish Biologist and offered support for the bag limit for Blue Gill. Brown acknowledged that it is impossible to fish out a lake of Blue Gill but observed the possibility of fishing out the adult Blue Gill population. Brown also offered support for the increase in the Muskie size limit.

David James, Whitley County

James stated opposition for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill and also offered disfavor for the elimination of the requirement to obtain written permission from a landowner to take coyotes.

Bill Tucker, Whitley County

Tucker stated opposition to the Blue Gill bag limit noting that if the proposal is adopted there are many people who will go hungry. In one year 3 period anglers took 4300 Blue Gill that were used for fish fries including one for INSportsman.com. Tucker also explained that he is originally from West Virginia where high power rifle hunting is allowed but he offered that the use of high power rifles in Indiana is not feasible. In any event, Tucker stated that a two or three shot maximum should be imposed in order to eliminate people from attempting to shoot deer on the run. Tucker also offered the opinion that the deer quotas need to be decreased.

Bob Chapman, Tri Lakes

Chapman stated that he is opposed to the high power rifle proposal. He requested that fishing on fishing beds be limited and expressed mixed feelings about the bag limit on Blue Gill.

Steve Anderson, Tri Lake

Anderson offered support for the 25 Blue Gill limit explaining that in the past 25 years he has observed a "dramatic change" in fish. Anderson stated that he was unable to mark a school of fish this year whereas 10 years ago there was "solid fish". Anderson also offered opposition for the high power rifle proposal.

Jeff Birch, Fort Wayne

Birch thanked the Department of Natural Resources stating that they are doing a great job. However, Birch stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal. Birch added that while hunting in 1974 if a hunter saw a deer it was a good week. Birch observed that deer populations are steadily declining again. Birch added that he will not take his daughter deer hunting if the proposal is approved. Birch also stated disfavor for the 25 fish Blue Gill limit suggesting that the season be limited instead.

Lowell Stahlhut, Allen County

Stahlhut stated opposition for the high power rifle proposal suggesting that certain firearms already allowed be prohibited. Stahlhut stated that he is a farmer who has observed dwindling deer populations.

Colton Comb, Whitley County

Comb stated opposition to the Blue Gill bag limit and the high power rifle proposals. Comb also suggested that the doe season be further limited.

Cameron Comb, Whitley County

Comb stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal.

Josh England, Tri Lakes

English offered support for the Blue Gill bag limit of 25 fish also suggesting the addition of a size limit. England opposed the high power rifle proposal citing declining deer populations and safety concerns. He noted that too many people just don't think about what they are doing. England stated also that he has two 10 year old sons who are ready to hunt but observed that he, himself, has not shot a deer in two years and only saw four deer all season. England noted that his sons won't have a chance to hunt.

Jim Secher, Allen County

Secher stated that the deer herd has been decimated adding that hunters need to stop taking the does. Secher also observed that the county quota system is unenforceable because there is no way to know from which county a deer was taken. He stated that he is "dead set against" the high power rifle proposal adding that hunter education must be funded and updated. Secher is a hunter education safety instructor who believes the course should be in a classroom and not conducted online. Secher observed that 90% of hunters cannot estimate range. Secher stated that he is accepting of the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.

Jeff Sagers, Whitley County

Sagers stated opposition to the high power rifle proposal for the reason that deer populations are significantly declining.

Mike Caster, Silver Lake

Caster stated that the proposed 44 inch limit for Muskie should be instituted state wide.

Melissa Caster, Silver Lake

Offered support for the 25 fish bag limit for Blue Gill.